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# STAY-AT- HOME JOURNEYS

AGNES  
WILSON  
OSBORNE







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# STAY-AT-HOME JOURNEYS













“Of course we think this home of ours is just the nicest of all.”



# STAY-AT-HOME JOURNEYS

BY

AGNES WILSON OSBORNE

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**THE LADY BEAUTIFUL**







## THE LADY BEAUTIFUL

**J**IM GRANGE had been chosen butler. One of the girls whispered it was because he was so nice and big and rosy-cheeked. He looked a bit stiff now, and very much dressed up in his Sunday suit. The curl that would come so annoyingly in his sandy hair was all straightened out. You could have slid on his head, it was so slippery smooth.

No, they were not always so stylish as to have a butler at the orphanage. It was only on the most special occasions that Miss Paxton singled out one of the older boys for the privilege of “tending the door” and ushering in the expected guest of honor. This glory carried with it the distinction of leaving the study-room early in order to be dressed in time.

All the other children were upstairs getting ready. Every now and then from his post, where he stood so handsomely at attention, Jim scanned the farthest height of the broad old stairway.



“No sight of her yet! But she’s a girl, so I suppose she must take a long time,” thought Jim.

He was watching for some evidence of Rose Ellen, his fellow-conspirator. They had worked out a system of secret signals so that he could give a sign to those above stairs when first he spied the guest. If she should come by auto, gliding in without warning, he was to use a certain closing of the door that would announce the arrival to Rose Ellen even before he should formally announce it to Miss Paxton in the adjoining office.

Rose Ellen always liked to be first when there was anything unusual on hand. Indeed she more or less made excitement with her secrets and her signals and all her funny romantic ways. Jim would not have admitted it, but he, or any one of the boys, was always willing, at a moment’s notice, to take up any challenge that her inventive brain threw out. Sources of real excitement were few in the mission orphanage, but tonight it was a genuine affair!

Of all the girls in the dormitory Rose



Ellen was ready first. Her braids and shoe-strings had passed inspection with approval. She slipped out quietly and took up a rather dangerous position over the banister, where, by leaning very far forward, she could get just a glimpse of the downstairs world.

Jim signaled promptly, "nothing doing."

It was against the rules of the orphanage to appear downstairs before the whole line of children was ready to march, so Rose Ellen had to refrain from venturing farther, though she was quite plainly visible now to anyone who might have looked up. But no one did. The teachers, all assembled in Miss Paxton's office, were politely waiting to meet the guest. They were excited, too, for guests did not often find their way to the mission home on the outskirts of Warrington.

"Do you see anything?" Mary and Elsie Kate called from the doorway above.

"Sh! She's just coming." A strangely uncalled-for rattling of the door by the new butler confirmed the fact.

Rose Ellen took a long look, then suddenly righted herself and bounced back into the dormitory a bit red in the face.



“What’s she like?” asked Mary.

“She’s a real one,” Rose Ellen answered.

“A real one?”

“Yes, a real home-lady. I know she is, not a teacher or a secretary or anything like that, but one who lives in a real home. I know she has one all her own.”

“How can you tell?”

“Oh, I can tell by looking at her.” Rose Ellen gave her head a toss for emphasis. “I know the kind that live in real homes; she is just like them. And her hair—they asked her to take her hat off—it is—well, warm and cozy, sort of like firelight; yes, that is what it is like.”

“What a crazy idea!” interrupted one of the older girls, who was acting as proctor. “Hair like firelight! You are always having such wild notions, Rose Ellen, and everyone else taking up with them! Come, you are all wanted downstairs now. Get in line. Much good praising up her hair will do, if we are not down on time!”

The older girl was nervously conscious of her position on this important night. She felt Rose Ellen’s unchecked enthusiasm to



be dangerous, something was sure to happen.

For all Rose Ellen was on tiptoe over the "real lady" who had come, she walked down demurely to the foot of the stairs where the girls' line met the boys'.

Fate had brought Jim Grange and Rose Ellen together as marching partners and externally Jim was propriety itself. He slyly poked the girl at his side with his elbow, saying, "Everyone's got to be good at supper tonight, ahem!" Jim expected to get some quick reply from Rose Ellen. One usually did. Strange to say, none came, and he realized she was not listening to him at all. Her eyes were fixed on the visitor.

"Say, Rose Ellen," he persisted, "what's her name?"

Rose Ellen turned her big dreamy eyes upon him. "It's the Lady Beautiful," she said, in that final way of hers that people always accepted.

"Some book name!" thought Jim, his usual admiration for the quick-tongued little mischief-maker failing for the moment. What could be interesting about a lady, silk-gowned though she was! "Honk! Honk!"



he grunted in a little parting snort as they separated and marched to opposite sides of the shining oil-cloth board.

All was silence for a moment, as they stood with heads bowed. Then the seventy young voices sang the quaint song that was their evening grace.<sup>1</sup>

“Thou who didst bless the children,  
And give the people bread,  
We thank thee for our homes, our food,  
We pray may all be fed.  
May none, dear Lord, be hungry,  
None homeless, sad, or cold;  
May all thy children through this night,  
Be safe within thy fold.”

How things could turn out as they did, when Rose Ellen was in a mood so apparently angelic, Jim could never understand, but trouble began in a small way, at once. Grace was over, and the time-worn question had just been asked, “What are you going to say to our visitor, children?” when Rose Ellen awkwardly knocked over a glass of water and stood staring without a word till the sing-song greeting was ended, and each child had clattered into place.

<sup>1</sup> Tune: *St. Christopher*.



Miss Paxton frowned a little. Her pride in the neat mission home was genuine and natural, and it seemed only right to her that children for whom so much was being done should show appreciation by good conduct especially during the visit of a new trustee. She said nothing about Rose Ellen's mishap, however, and began serving the dinner upon the great pile of plates before her.

The fish and potatoes were good, but Rose Ellen ate as one in a dream. She did not even finish her banana, and she loved bananas. Something about the lady, her soft dress, the bits of lace, the smiling gentleness of her face, awoke in Rose Ellen an old heart-hunger. She had not had it so badly since she had been found and brought to the orphanage. In the old knock-about days when she lived anywhere, the strange inner longing had made her stand for hours looking in at lighted windows where white table-cloths were spread for the evening meal, and soft lamp-shades made a warm glow over all the room.

That the Lady Beautiful had come from a real home, Rose Ellen felt instinctively—



the kind of home she had dreamed about, but had never seen. She had pieced together all its wondrous parts from things she had read, from things she had seen in big store windows, and from advertisements.

As they were eating dessert, the Lady Beautiful was formally introduced.

“This is a new friend of ours who has just returned from a long and wonderful journey,” explained Miss Paxton. “She tells me she has seen many kinds of homes while visiting the far-away parts of our country. She is interested in this home of ours, in all sorts of homes, and in helping to make our America a better home for everyone who lives here.”

Rose Ellen loved to hear of new and wonderful things, but a strange rebelliousness seized her. Why should the lady with the beautiful home have, besides, all this joy of seeing things? Think of having a glimpse into all the other homes of the country, when she, Rose Ellen, longed to see and know just one—one real home!

It might have been all right if Miss Paxton had not added:



“I have asked our friend to tell us about these other homes. For while we cannot travel as she has, we should love to take a stay-at-home journey. Of course we think this home of ours is just the nicest of all, but we should like to know about the homes of other American boys and girls.”

Then to everyone's astonishment Rose Ellen spoke right out.

“I don't think this home the nicest of all. I would like to be in any of those other places that are really interesting instead of here.”

A shudder ran around the board. Even the heavy dishes seemed to give a little shivering clatter.

Miss Paxton turned red and looked amazed. “You may go right up to bed, Rose Ellen. How could you be so rude?” And she had always seemed so on Rose Ellen's side, too, thought Jim to himself. Everyone held his breath; no one even thought of whispering; the room was absolutely still. Would she answer back? What would she say? You could never tell with Rose Ellen.



The blow fell on a strangely unmoved little creature. She rose to go. Then she took one more look at her Lady Beautiful, and their eyes met.

Miss Paxton leaned forward to catch a low word her guest was saying. Rose Ellen hesitated a moment, stood still, and then Miss Paxton said quite calmly and pleasantly, "Rose Ellen, you have a friend at court who pleads for you. Perhaps if you stay, you will feel differently about things. No, don't go back to your seat. You must sit right here until we are ready to go to the living-room."

Miss Paxton's idea, doubtless, was to have Rose Ellen in safe nearby quarters.

"Couldn't have rewarded her better," chuckled Jim Grange under his breath to young Chapin. "She's been leaning all over her chair to keep her eyes on that lady—calls her some fancy name or other."

Soon Miss Paxton tapped lightly on the table and with this signal the boys and girls arose. Instead of going into the study-hall, as on ordinary week nights, they marched to the living-room where on Friday evenings



they had games. Tonight it was to be stories. The fire in the fireplace transfigured the large bare room by its cozy warmth.

Miss Paxton, the visitor, and Rose Ellen brought up the rear of the procession.

As Miss Paxton was busy arranging everybody, Rose Ellen was left standing beside the lovely visitor, so near that she could almost touch the soft silkiness of her dress. She noticed how the light from the fire mingled with the red-gold hair of the Lady Beautiful. Suddenly the visitor smiled as she looked down at the outwardly demure and inwardly defiant little girl at her side.

“Tell me what it is you don’t like here. Don’t be afraid, just tell me what it is,” urged the voice that Rose Ellen had already decided was like a lullaby. She had never heard a lullaby, but she was always imagining what she had never seen or heard.

“Oh, it just isn’t a real home,” said Rose Ellen hesitatingly. It was hard to explain what she felt about the orphanage. They had surely been wonderfully good to her there. She hoped the lady would ask nothing more; but she did.



“What is a real home?” Her voice sounded almost wistful Rose Ellen thought. She asked as if she really wanted to know.

“I wonder!” Rose Ellen said and stopped short.

“If you find out, will you let me know? I have wondered about it myself.”

She put out her hand to touch the little girl’s dark hair, when at that moment Miss Paxton came toward them.

“Do you wish to begin?” she asked.

Something about the orphanage had touched the heart-love of the new trustee—especially something about Rose Ellen. To her own surprise she found herself answering:

“Miss Paxton—I’ve decided I can’t do it—I can’t tell the whole story in one evening. I’d rather tell about just one of the homes in those far-off spots and make these boys and girls know it as I do. Then, perhaps,—” she hesitated, “If they like it, I might come again.”

There was perfect silence now. The lady turned from the big chair that had been placed for her and sat down on a low stool



among the children. The circle of firelit faces glowed with expectant interest.

“I think we shall take a journey to some warm and sunny land this wintry evening,” she began. “I know one of the brightest spots in the world that sends us golden yellow things to eat. You had some of these things here for supper this evening. They were long and yellow.”

“Yes, bananas, bananas!” shouted a chorus.

“That is right. Now I have in mind a story about ‘Felipe of the Golden Bananas.’ Shall I tell you about him?”

“Yes, yes!” came from every boy and girl.







# FELIPE OF THE GOLDEN BANANAS







## FELIPE OF THE GOLDEN BANANAS

**T**HE sun had been shining brightly for some time, and it was already hot on the old Spanish road that winds down among the sugar plantations to the sea. It would be a long trip to the market and back, thought Felipe, as he emptied the last basketful of bananas into the rickety old ox-cart.

Sancho, the ox, stood waiting patiently, his head down. He wore no yoke, but instead, a band was strapped across his forehead, after the fashion of Porto Rican oxen, in such a way as to make his burden easy to draw.

It took a good jump for Felipe to get back into his home, for the little shack was set on four shaky wooden posts high off the ground, and the ladder that led to the doorway lacked three rounds. They had been missing always, it seemed to Felipe. At least he had climbed in and out ever since he was a baby as small as his brother Diego. It was excellent practise and gave



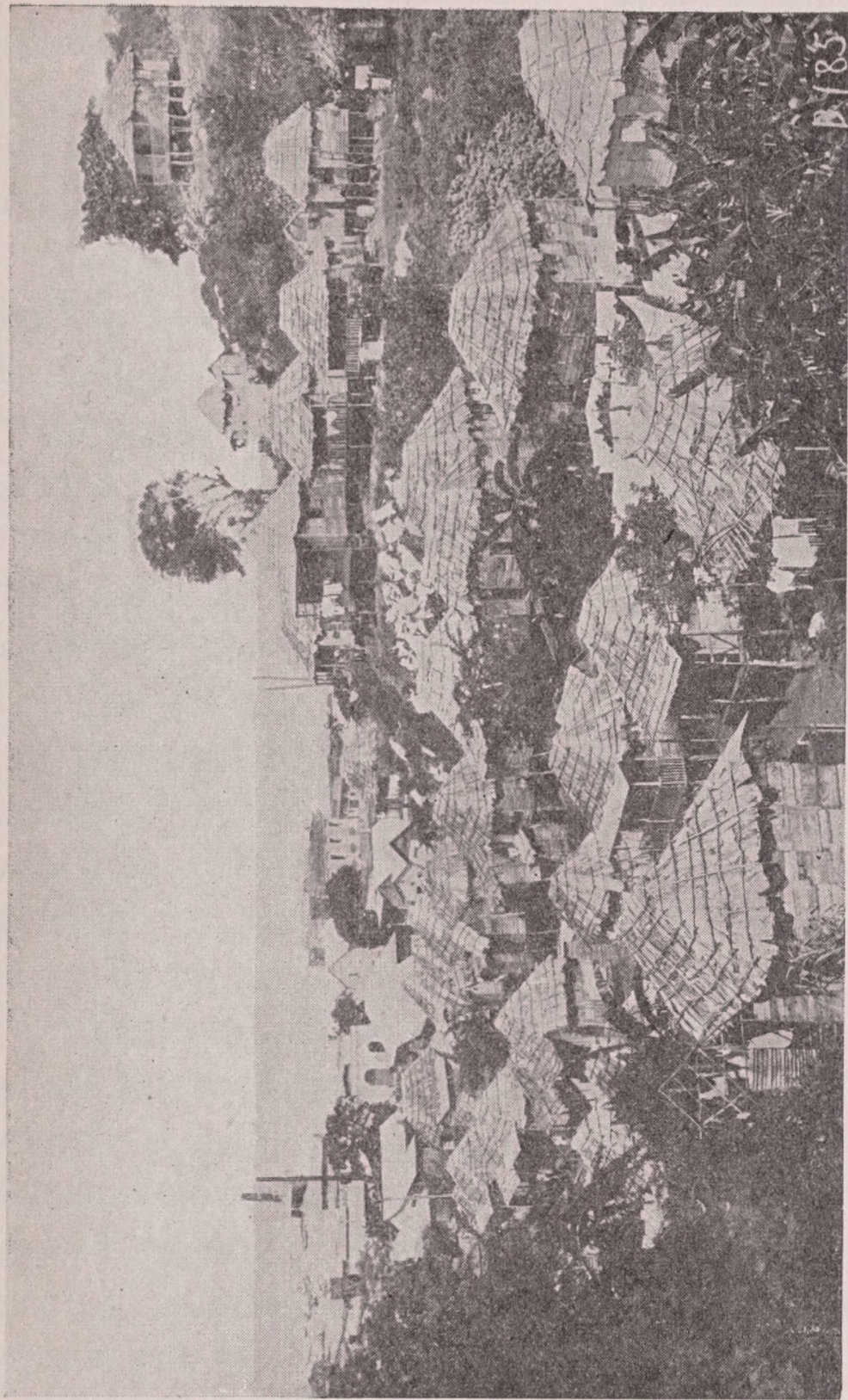
him skill when he wished to climb up the smooth coconut-palms in the valley.

“You must have some breakfast before you go, Felipe,” said his mother. “Come, Benito, give your brother the cup.” And Benito, who was squatting on the floor drinking his black coffee, handed the great round coconut shell to his mother after one more gulp. The few drops that were left, she poured into the mouth of a little crying baby in her arms, saying, “Take that quickly, little Marco, and be quiet; we must get our man off to town.”

Felipe’s sister Maria limped across the room with the rusty old coffee pot. She just escaped spilling some of the boiling black water on Felipe’s bare feet as she tried to fill the shell.

It was half dark in the windowless room, but through the open doorway the morning sunlight gleamed brightly enough to reveal the outlines of the family hammock and its pile of rumpled rags where the little brothers had been sleeping. Two middle-sized children, Joanna and Pedro, still lay asleep in the corner on the coconut





“The little shack was set on four shaky wooden posts high off the ground.”







leaves that formed their bed. They did not waken with the crying of little Marco, for he cried often, poor baby, and they were used to it.

Felipe finished his breakfast of black coffee and handed the cup to Maria who watched her brother with admiring eyes. "Be sure to see what the great ladies in the Plaza are wearing today," she whispered, smoothing down over her bare lame leg, so thin and stiff, the little scant white shirt that was her own entire costume.

"Do not stay so late that the moon shines on you and brings us bad luck, Felipe Tomasito," added the mother. "We will all work hard while you are at the market and gather for you tomorrow's load. You will soon be rich."

"Yes, almost by the next Feast Day I shall have clothes enough to go to the government school. Pedro shall wear them after me, and Diego after him. We must all go to school. What, Diego, can you stop eating bananas long enough to go to school, think you?"

Then they all laughed. Joanna awoke and



held out sleepy arms. "Let me go too, Felipe." Even Marco smiled at the big brother, who patted him gently as he went out the door and jumped to the ground.

The little wan Porto Rican woman stood in the doorway of the thatched hut and looked proudly after her boy, straight and brown as a nut. His heavy dark hair was thrown back from his smiling face as he turned to wave, "Adios."

"When he goes to the town in his suit of new school clothes, all the girls will delight in Felipe Tomasito Rodriquez!" thought his mother, and she prayed each saint of his name for special protection. Little did either of them think that calm morning in what special need of protection they were all to be before night. As the ox-cart jogged out of sight, the mother hummed a quaint Spanish love song of the old, old world, which had floated over the wide, high seas centuries before.

Felipe soon joined other country folk who, like himself, were carrying fruit and vegetables to town, some in carts, some on basket-laden donkeys. Some pushed wheelbar-



rows, and others carried large trays upon their heads. Now and then an American automobile whizzed by. Felipe knew well the old Spanish military highway. For some time he had been carrying bananas to market for an old planter who lived in the valley, saving every penny he earned to buy the clothes he must have before he could attend the government school. His thoughts this morning ran on from one thing to another; what he was going to buy today in the great city with his share of the money received from the sale of the bananas; of the long walk he would have to take every day to the government school, but it would be worth all the tired aches, for he would soon know how to be a real American, and then what could he not do! He would be rich enough to buy some pigs and chickens to keep in the house, like their neighbors, the Apontes. The little brothers would not have to run around naked, and they should then go to school. But first of all the mother should have money for candles to burn for little Marco to make him well. That was what the priest said she must do to have him



healed, and they had no money at all now to give the holy man.

Despite the burning sun, the time passed quickly until here and there between the palm groves Felipe could see the stone ruins of the ancient wall that once surrounded the city. Above it the old Spanish castle stood out against the sky. Felipe knew what it was that fluttered over the gray stronghold, very tiny though it looked in the distance. He almost crossed himself in reverence when he saw it. It was the same flag that flew over the new schoolhouse, too. It had brought many good things to Porto Rico from the States across the water. It would bring many more, too.

The lumbering old ox-cart creaked along till they came to the bridge that led to the city gate. Here everyone must proceed slowly, and Felipe rested the good ox as he watched the women washing clothes on the river stones. The waters looked unusually dark and muddy, but there had been no sign of rain. Neither Felipe nor his companions noticed the dark clouds that were beginning to pile up like a black mountain



behind the palms, shutting off the hazy purple hills.

Near the city gate, the wonderful old Spanish wall was almost covered with American posters and advertisements. The market just inside was also a strange jumble of old and new, as is the way in the new, old country of Porto Rico.

The market-place, warm and bright, was filled with the chattering crowd who stood about in front of the open booths. Buying was good that morning, and Felipe handed out the golden clusters of ripe fruit with a singing heart. Now and again he looked down at his bare brown feet and pictured how fine they would look covered by the shoes and stockings that he must wear if he wished to go to the government school.

The bananas were nearly all sold—but why was it growing dark so suddenly? Could it be late? No, for the bells from the old church tower had not long since rung noon. Yet the sky was black, and a hushed stillness, as of night, hung over the market-place which a few moments before had been so full of noisy, laughing crowds. Why, all



the people were scuttling in various directions like an overturned nest of mice running for shelter!

In a dazed way Felipe stood taking in the strange scene until he was roused by the ox. Old Sancho, who had never before in his life moved on his own initiative, was now pulling restlessly at the traces, actually trying to break away.

Then it dawned upon Felipe's mind what was coming. Every boy and girl on the islands of the South Seas has heard stories of great hurricanes. In hushed tones his mother had told her children of the storm that had swept over their peaceful island fifteen years before. The fierce winds had snapped off the great palm trees as easily as matches are broken by a child. It had left destruction and chaos in its path.

Felipe crossed himself and sprang into the old cart. He gave Sancho free leave to make the fastest speed he would, and, for once in his life, Sancho ran. Even the animals seemed to have knowledge of the great hurricanes!

"Only save my mother and little Maria



and the baby!" prayed Felipe. He felt that the other children would be able to save themselves somehow. Oh, if he could only reach home in time!

There were no women washing in the river now. Angry and swollen were the waters under the old high bridge. It was coming—the storm—faster and faster. Felipe was just across when the fury broke. Everything broke at once, the boy remembered afterwards. Somehow he found himself on the ground. Into the dead hush that had hung heavy, there crashed a hundred fierce gusts and blasts of wind whirling and swirling in every direction. He was near the river where the country was open, but it seemed only a few feet away that the trees up the valley fought for life, swaying their great branches angrily, then groaning and crashing until the ground shook and trembled. It seemed hours to Felipe that he lay there in the road flat on his face, digging his toes and fingers into the earth. Then he could not remember anything.

When he came to himself, it was at the sound of a kind voice asking, "All right?"



Felipe opened his eyelids, wet with water, and looked into a white man's face. He was flat on his back now. Where was he? Why had he wakened so suddenly?

Then he remembered the hurricane. "Mother!" he cried and jumped to his feet.

"Where is your mother?" asked the American. "You are all right yourself?"

"Yes," said Felipe quickly. "But where are Maria and the baby?"

"Come with us and we will find them. We are here to find those whom the hurricane has injured.

Felipe looked about. The old cart was a crushed heap of splinters in the road beside him. A piece of it had evidently hit his head, knocking him unconscious. Old Sancho was nowhere in sight. But nothing mattered then except his mother and the children, and Felipe hurried on with the Americans. As they went along, he discovered from their conversation that they were the people who lived at the fine mission hospital he had once seen. Sick folk were taken there and cured without the burning of candles. Felipe could not believe this was true



because his mother had taught him that only burning candles before the saints could help the sick to regain their health. And yet all along the road the doctor would stop to bind up the wound of some stricken sufferer, passing along from one to another, never stopping for money—not even expecting it to be offered to him.

When they came to the turn of the road where little Maria so often awaited his return, Felipe's eager eyes searched in every direction. Nothing of the shack remained in sight except a splintered post still standing in the midst of a pile of coconut branches. That was all that was left of the poor little home!

He tried hard to hold his voice steady as he gave a long, loud "Hallo!" He called twice, three times. No answer. Then from a distance came the welcome response. Felipe ran forward just as Pedro appeared, waving his arm excitedly.

"We thought you were dead," he shouted.

"And you?"

"We hid in a cave of which Mother knew. There are many of us there."



“Are there any who are hurt?” interrupted the doctor.

“Yes, there is Maria and old Mother Eliza and the Porfiro baby and—”

But before he had finished, Felipe was off. Pedro and the doctor followed immediately.

Many of the people in the cave came running out to meet them. All, yes, all of Felipe’s family appeared one by one, save Maria. His quick eye counted even the baby Marco in his mother’s arms.

“Maria!” he cried. “Where is the little lame Maria?”

“She is calling for you now. She is hurt, badly hurt,” said his mother as she led the way into the underground dug-out where some thirty people from near-by shacks had found refuge. The doctor started at once to aid the sick and injured. Little Maria lay on the ground and moaned as Felipe led his new American friend to her side.

“It is a man who helps folks without even asking for their money, Mother,” said Felipe, remembering how the doctor had helped those who lay bruised by the roadside.



“By all the saints!” exclaimed the devout little woman.

“It is by the love of the Master, Jesus,” said the doctor quietly, as he looked at the child beside him.

“She will need to come to the hospital,” he said, and he patted Maria’s head reassuringly. “The little lame leg can be made strong and well, too.”

“Well?” murmured the child, wonderingly. She had stopped crying—then to everyone’s surprise she burst into heart-breaking sobs, “I will be well, I can run!” she sobbed. “But Felipe!” she exclaimed suddenly. “He has lost all his new clothes! He can never go to school!”

Felipe had not thought of that. At that instant the doctor glanced toward the boy and noticed his face turn pale under the brown skin.

“Gone! Yes, and the ox and the cart gone, too!” Felipe murmured in a dazed way.

The American doctor realized that he must be witnessing some disappointment bitter beyond that which hurricanes usually



bring. Such a home as Felipe's could be rebuilt in no time, and they were never really furnished. This must be a greater tragedy than a home lost.

"What is the trouble?" he questioned kindly. Then from them all he pieced together the broken story of how Felipe had worked and saved every penny so that he might go to the government school, and of how he had hoped to do so much for himself and for the other children.

"I tell you," he clapped his hands on the boy's shoulders, "we must get you into the mission school. It was built for boys like you."

"But shoes!" exclaimed Felipe, "won't I need any there?"

"Yes, you will, but boys and girls over in the States have sent shoes, books, and many other things because they want to help. First, we will build a house for your mother and the children. We will build a clean house bright with windows, so that the baby will grow strong and well."

As the doctor passed on to help the others, Felipe lifted Maria tenderly in his strong



arms and placed her on some soft leaves to make her more comfortable. He thought over and over of the wonderful American mission school where he would be so soon. It seemed as if all around were a new world, a world from which the hurricane had torn away that which was ugly and dirty and sad. No more long trips to the market to make a few paltry pennies, no more long waiting to buy clothes for school, no more dirty shack with its rickety, rungless ladder, and, best of all, Maria no more with a pitiful lame leg, but a romping, joyous Maria to join in making a new American home.







# THE BOY WHO WON







## THE BOY WHO WON

“GOOD evening, good evening,” was the joyful shout which greeted the Lady Beautiful as she came in, a little late because of the heavy storm which had blown the deep snow in drifts. She spread her hands out before the flames of the bright fire until the rosy light seemed to shine through them, outlining each finger in pink.

“Whoo-o-o!” she shivered. “This reminds me of a cold North country which is part of our own United States. I think we will journey to Alaska tonight. I hear you have had a native of that country here this very day.”

Everybody looked at everybody else. The Lady Beautiful was the only new face among the familiar boy and girl faces there in the rosy firelight.

“Yes,” continued the Lady, “he was here for supper. Indeed, he brought part of the supper with him. Come, who can tell us what came from Alaska today to this home?”



The boys and girls thought hard; they were trying to remember their geography.

“Was it—fish?” ventured a small voice.

“Yes, that was it, of course,—fish. Fish swarm the lakes and the rivers of that Northland. Hundreds were caught last summer by Alaskan men and boys and packed to send down here. If we should go there right now, we would find the lakes and rivers and even part of the ocean itself frozen. But all winter the Eskimos catch the little ‘tomcod’ on which they live for months. Fish is the food three times a day in Alaska. Now we will start on our journey.”

### THE BOY WHO WON

It was icy cold in the white North country. The snow lay piled so high, it seemed as if it must have been there always.

And there was ice—a whole river of ice. The great glacier itself stretched gray-blue for miles until it was suddenly broken right off into the ocean and slowly floated in iceberg mountains down to the far-off southern seas. Near where the iceberg met the sea



was what is called a "leed," a big stretch of clear ice between crags of snow, and here the village folk gathered for skating games.

Noadluk and his father had been fishing all day in the dusky fog, for it was the season in Alaska when the sun is so drowsy, it scarcely gets up at all for months. They had made a good day's haul of silver-gray fish and had stowed it carefully away in the dog-sled. Now they were hurrying to the leed where Noadluk was to play in a big skating contest.

The village folk, warmly wrapped in fur parkas, were gathered to watch the game. Also the boys from the mission home for orphans had come to join the village boys in the race. Alaskan children are good athletes and every good skater was out tonight.

As the dog-sled arrived near the leed, Noadluk jumped out, fastened on his skates, tightening carefully the sealskin thong across his fur boots. His were good skates, tried out in many a game. He had made them himself by fitting into blocks of wood pieces of old iron that had been polished and sharpened.



The boy struck out freely over the hard ice. A dozen other boys were already practising the strokes they knew so well, and a thrill of excitement filled the air. The sky was aglow with its own fireworks and sparklers, in honor of the race. All the Fourth of July celebrations in the world could not equal it. The sun may be a sleepy old thing during Alaskan winters, but these magical northern lights make up for its laziness.

Now the game was on. It was a race to see who could be swiftest in sending a small, round, wooden puck up the stretch to the goal. The field was full of large cracks, hilly snow mounds, and holes where the less sure-footed might fall, or, even worse, lose his puck and be out of the game.

Few boys from the States could rival these skaters, now jumping dangerous crevices, now leaping over jagged pieces of ice, now dashing along swift as lightning. From the start-off Noadluk was among the first in skating, but he fumbled a bit with his stick. Once he struck off to the side and had to go out of his way to recover the wooden puck which had almost buried itself in a pile of



snow. To make up for lost time he made a mad dash and gave the little puck a hard drive that landed it far up along ahead of all the rest. That was dangerous play. Someone else might reach it first and then—who knows where an opponent's stick might land the precious thing! The very rashness of the stroke took everyone by surprise. But Noadluk shot forward, reaching his puck just in time to knock a dangerous stick aside, almost losing his balance as he did so.

“Keok again!” he muttered under his breath. “He is always on hand.” Noadluk had no time to waste. Keok's agile body had flung itself past him and was speeding away across the ice. Noadluk bore down closely upon him. It was a long smooth stretch ahead and the two were now far in the lead. They were skating hard and fast; almost abreast now, neither losing, neither seeming to gain an inch. Both were panting hard. They were almost at the end of the course.

Suddenly, Noadluk's puck took a spurt, turned, and disappeared. To lose his puck



even for a minute at this stage of the great race meant certain defeat. Triumphantly Keok forged ahead. Noadluk took a swift glance around. He dashed forward and in another moment there came the reassuring sound of his stick against wood. He made one more long, swift stroke—and stood victor at the goal.

A great shout arose. The merry Eskimo voices that had been so still with the breathless excitement of the moment were let loose in a hubbub of congratulation.

Noadluk's father's face in his furry hood looked like the round, smiling moon. He was trying hard to preserve his dignity, and not show too much pride in this son of his.

Soon those who had watched the game were back on the mainland, the dog-sleds were moving, and the people were going home in a hurry. Now that the game was over, it seemed cold indeed, despite furry coats and mittens.

Noadluk, tucked up behind his father, was gliding over the snow behind the noiseless feet of the big, shaggy dogs.

Off in another direction they saw Keok



“mushing” slowly on foot through the soft snow.

“Poor Keok!” sighed Noadluk, a little wistfully.

“He is a fine, swift skater, and he took his defeat like a true Eskimo,” added the father. In his own pride he could afford to be gracious to the son of another father. “Whose son is he, this Keok?” he asked.

“His father is a nobody, a man who works in the mines when he is not drunk, and plays with white folk—the white men who come and go.”

Despite the exhilaration of his victory, Noadluk was not in a mood for talking, and said no more. His father, too, dropped into silence—a sad silence. Few subjects troubled him more than the thought of the men of his people who went too much “with the white folk who come and go.” What different kinds of white men there were! He himself worked much with those who had brought them the little church and school.

When they reached home neither the father nor the son was as joyous as might



have well been expected. They were half-way down the ladder that led from the little outside opening into the lower store-room before either thought to shout the news of the race to the mother.

She came running to meet them through the low tunnel that led to the warm living-room. She looked with pride at her son, already taller than herself, though it must be said that Noadluk's mother made up in width what she lacked in height.

The baby, left by himself, raised a wail. He lay on his reindeer robe beside the oil-stove, a bundle of fur with bright black eyes shining out from under the soft fawn-skin bonnet. The wailing was soon at an end, for his mother supplied the never-failing Eskimo remedy, a juicy bit of seal blubber to suck on. There was more substantial fare provided for the hungry men: dried salmon with wonderful fish-oil sauce, and vegetables which they had picked from their own garden, months before, and put away for the winter use. When the big family bowl was empty, and the snow-sharpened appetites were satisfied, the mother adjusted the



lamp. A strange lamp it was indeed, just a dried eulachan or candle-fish, so full of oil itself, it needed only to be lighted to burn brightly. She sat down on the floor underneath the flame and beside the heap of furs she had been sewing.

“Here, swift son of mine, look what I have made you. I knew you would win,” she said as she held up a pair of soft fur mittens. Again she set to work at her sewing while they told her the tale of all that had happened in the great race. She listened eagerly as her skilled hands plied the needle in and out of the new little parka she was making for the baby.

The next day was Sunday, always a day of joy to these Eskimos. No one worked, for everybody went to Sunday-school and service at the little red mission church. Even the baby brother nodded peacefully over his mother’s shoulder from the warm comfortable hood on her back.

After the church service, Noadluk had to endure the ordeal of hearing his father tell the missionary pastor about the race. The white man was much interested, for



when he was a boy back in the States, he, himself, had played a game much like this. He laid his hand on Noakluk's shoulder.

"I believe in sports," he said. "I like our Christian boys to lead the race, to be the swift and the strong. The boys who play fair and win on the ice will be leaders in pushing better things for Alaska."

A new idea seemed to occur to him. "I want the children of the Sunday-school to feel that they have a part in the victory of one of our boys. Next Sunday we will award as a prize something that boys in the States sent for a boy like you, Noadluk."

Noadluk squirmed uncomfortably. "He is a little shy and awkward," thought the minister; "but he has a fine face, bright and honest like his good father."

That afternoon anyone watching the snow path before Noadluk's house would have seen a strange thing. The Eskimo boy walked away from the house, then turned back, then away, and back. Several times he did this as if undecided what to do. Then he halted, dead still in the path, holding his hands before him and staring at



the fur mittens which his mother had given him to celebrate his victory at the game. Anyone who could have seen his face would have wondered what there was about that gift to make him look so unhappy. Suddenly, with a determined air he started forward.

During the winter the houses are often so buried in the snow that they appear as mounds of snow with chimneys extending from the top. High poles appear near each mound and to these poles are tied leather-covered canoes and bundles of dried fish.

Noadluk wound his way between the snow mounds until he came to the outskirts of the village. He was looking for someone, yet he seemed not anxious to proceed. At length he met a boy. "Do you know where Keok's home is?" he asked.

The boy directed him to a tumble-down hut. On closer inspection Noadluk found it to be a heap of ice and snow supported by a few pieces of timber—old driftwood it looked like. The fish-skin covering of the little opening where one enters was torn and old, and as Noadluk looked inside he saw

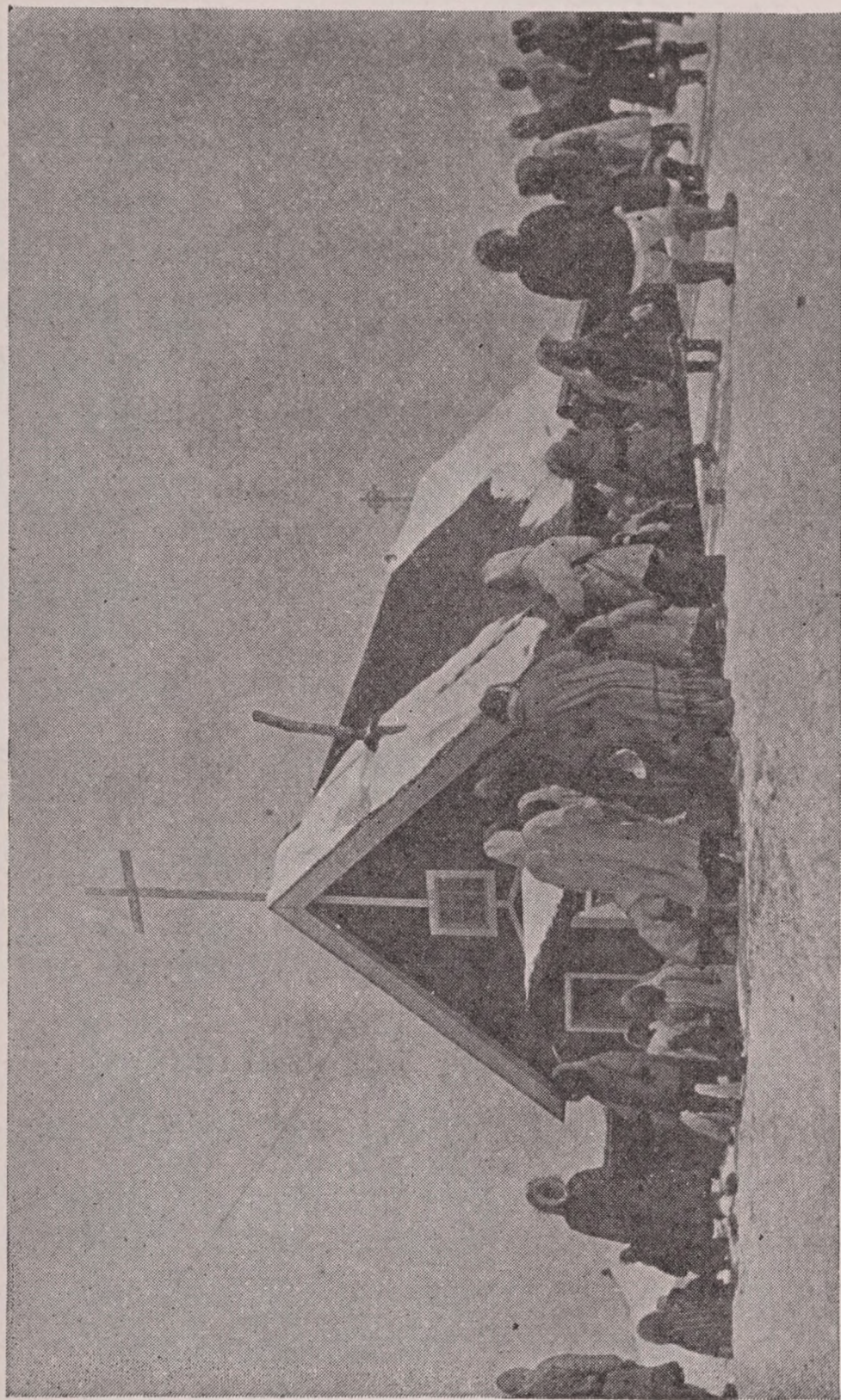


that the house contained but one room, and no one was in sight. There were no nice, warm sleeping bunks such as were in Noadluk's house; only a heap of old furs, and the smell of stale fish was strong. Noadluk was surprised, for at this time most of the village houses had two good rooms and a special place for the winter fish supply. The change had been brought about by the white teachers who taught not only of a White City above, but also of how to make clean, white Eskimo towns in Alaska.

Noadluk turned away half relieved, half disappointed. At that instant a fearful racket came from behind a near-by hut. It was a dog fight. Naturally Noadluk hastened his steps. He arrived just in time to see the finish of a quarrel between two old huskies and a great, shaggy, half-wolf Eskimo dog.

A group of boys was watching the fight. Among them, Noadluk recognized the worn, patched coat of Keok, a coat that had lost most of its long fur. He hesitated a moment, then went forward determinedly. It was Keok who turned and eagerly told him





*Courtesy Point Hope Association*

“The following Sunday promptly at the appointed hour Keok was at the door of the little red church.”







the story of the fight. When he had finished, Noadluk began a bit stiffly.

“Keok, you are a fine skater and a good sportsman. The white man at the church is interested in such. He told me so. I would like to take you to our school next Sunday.”

Keok looked at him in surprise. He was quite still for a moment; then he said, “Yes, I will come.” Not often had he known anyone to take an interest in him. No one ever did at home.

The following Sunday promptly at the appointed hour, Keok was at the door of the little red church. Noadluk had been inside talking to the missionary. He came out looking quite excited and took Keok into the mission church.

Never before had there been such a Sunday-school session. The boys from the mission orphanage whispered excitedly. They had had the advantage of being able to get together and make plans and, Sunday-school though it was, they had a cheer all ready to give Noadluk at the right moment. It was a new thing—cheering—learned



from the American teachers, and therefore it must be good for any occasion.

Most Sunday-school gatherings in Alaska are not so different from ours. They have the same lessons and the same songs we do. Today the Eskimo voices sang loud and clear, "Fight the Good Fight," the very words as we sing them ourselves.

Fight the good fight with all thy might!  
Christ is thy strength, and Christ thy right;  
Lay hold on life, and it shall be  
Thy joy and crown eternally.

Run the straight race thro' God's good grace  
Lift up thine eyes, and seek his face;  
Life with its way before us lies,  
Christ is the path and Christ the prize.

As the song ended, the boys and girls sat down again looking forward to the prize-giving. And then came a surprise! The minister spoke in a fine way all about honesty and fairness being the highest goal toward which we strive. He described the prize, a beautiful book full of pictures of boats and dogs and houses such as one does not see in Alaska. American boys had gathered these pictures together and made



them into a book which they sent to boys in Alaska. "The winner," he said, very plainly, "is Keok, whom we are glad to welcome here for the first time."

Keok sat dazed. He did not move. Could he have heard correctly what the strange white man had said?

The minister added, "A serious thing happened at the game last week which Noadluk now wishes to explain and make right before everyone."

Somehow Noadluk got to his feet. He could scarcely recognize his own voice. To confess to all those friendly faces the fearful cheat he had been was the most difficult thing he had ever done. But he left nothing out of the whole story, how the puck that turned up ahead and sailed into the goal had been an extra one that had been in his pocket all along.

The people in the audience sat dumbfounded as Noadluk turned and led Keok up to the platform to receive the prize.

After the service, while the crowd talked excitedly about what had happened, the minister asked Keok about his home.



The boy blushed awkwardly, shifting from one hand to the other the wonderful book of pictures. "My home is what is left of our tumbled-down hut," he said, "and I have lived there alone these three weeks. It is longer than ever before that my father does not return at night. I do not know what has happened."

"And your mother?"

"She died of the sickness. It is three months now," answered the boy quietly.

The American looked grave and sad. It was the same story everywhere—the terrible influenza that had broken up so many homes in Alaska. The mission hospital had been so full that they had not been able to care for half the sick ones who came to them. The orphanage was full to overflowing with children who, like Keok, had been left homeless.

The minister turned to Noadluk's father: "It is just such a boy as this whom we ought to be able to take into the orphan school. He could learn much there, but there is not another inch in the place."

The man beside him spoke up quickly.



“Keok is coming home with us. He can help with the fishing and find his place by the fire. He will be a brother to my big Noadluk there.”

“That’s splendid!” A happy glow came to the white man’s face. “A true Christian home it will be, Keok, where you can learn the things that make a boy a real winner as our Noadluk has now learned to be.”

“A real winner!” murmured the boy’s father. And Noadluk, for whom the hardest thing of all had been the thought of his father’s disappointment, saw in his big, oval face a pride which was greater than had ever been there before, as he said again, “My son, a real winner!”



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# THE HOUSE THAT MOVED AWAY







## THE HOUSE THAT MOVED AWAY

TO the eager children, the next Friday was a long time coming, but the days passed pleasantly for all that. With Miss Paxton's help some of the boys and girls were arranging a surprise for the Lady Beautiful. They hung mysteriously across one side of the long living-room a white curtain. Behind a dark green screen at the opposite side of the room was hidden a stereopticon machine which Miss Paxton had secured from a city church.

When the Lady Beautiful arrived she found the children all seated and the lights turned low. Suppressed little giggles came from here and there. Rose Ellen guided the guest to her seat by the glowing fire. "Good evening, Lady Beautiful!" the children tried to say just as usual, but it was of no use; they could not keep excitement out of their voices.

In another moment a whirring sound was heard, the dark screen was set to one side, and then on the white curtain there ap-



peared pictures of the land of "Felipe of the Golden Bananas." Soon one of the girls stepped forward and told that part of the Lady Beautiful's story of Porto Rico which she liked best, and then another girl told her favorite part, and another, hers. There was so much clapping of hands after this, that no one noticed a pause in the pictures until on the screen before them there appeared the land of "Noadluk" and "Keok."

Jim Granger made this a personally conducted tour through Alaska, and a jolly journey it was, for Jim kept everyone laughing with his funny comments on the pictures.

"Well, that was a surprise!" exclaimed the Lady Beautiful when the last Alaskan picture had been shown.

"Where do we travel tonight?" asked one of the boys.

"We're going to stay in the United States again this evening and hear about something you had for supper."

"What did we have?" whispered one to another. "Soup? No, it couldn't be that.



Brown bread? No, it surely couldn't be that!"

"I know," shouted Jim Granger. "Beans!"

"Yes, that is it. All aboard for our next journey!"

### THE HOUSE THAT MOVED AWAY

If any of you have made gardens, you know that you plant seeds in such order that all summer long vegetables will ripen on successive days, not all at one time. Then every day there will be nice fresh beans for the table.

But planting is not done in this way where vegetables are raised to be sealed up tight in cans for winter use. In such fields the seeds must all grow and get ripe at once in just the best season, and then there is the one great task of picking, canning, and packing them to send away to the people who like to eat string beans in winter.

In the cannery fields of the West, there were hundreds and hundreds of green



bushes all heavy with ripe pods, and in the factory across the way were hundreds of shining tin cans waiting to be filled. Great steamers and chopping machines stood ready for their work. Machines could do this part of the work, but only hands could bring the beans from the green fields to the factory. The long pods must be picked by quick, nimble fingers working all day long, day after day and day after day, until the entire bean crop should be harvested.

Such a lot of fingers as were gathered together for the bean picking last summer! They were of all sizes. Fathers', mothers', and children's fingers. Some were the sun-burnt fingers of Russian immigrants, some the slender yellow fingers of Chinese laborers, and a great, great many were dark brown fingers of those whom we call Spanish Americans.

There were many tiny laborers who grew weary as the day passed, and they might be found fast asleep between the rows of beans, the sun beating down on the sleepy heads. Such naps were a great family misfortune, for at the end of the day there



would be fewer beans to show, and consequently fewer pennies received for the day's work.

There was one group in the bean fields, however, that everyone wished would sleep—the very little people, the babies. If only they would sleep instead of cry so much. They jogged along on their mothers' bent backs or lay on the ground near the field where the mother or older sister picked, crying, crying a great deal.

Some babies were left at home with the second eldest child, perhaps, or some were cared for by an old grandmother who was too slow now to work in the fields. Such a home-baby was Aurora. All day she played in and out among the shelters that the people called home.

There were so many of these "homes" to which the workers came back from the fields at night that together they might almost be said to form a village or a town, except for the fact that they did not look as if they were planned to last long. They were plainly temporary shelters. Things seemed to just happen to be where they



were. Nothing looked as if it meant to remain long where or as it was.

But Aurora felt quite content, for her sturdy two-year-old legs had explored pretty nearly everything and everywhere. Aurora was a friendly little soul whom everyone knew and to whom any shack was home. If she was sleepy, wherever she happened to be she would pillow her brown head with its shock of dark hair on something and take a nap. At lunch time, when a neighboring little sister was making a bit of soup go round her family, Aurora would appear in the doorway for her share.

When she wandered too far afield, some kindly person was sure to see her, pick her up, and turn her towards home. She always came back, and the half-blind grandmother, who was all of the family left at home, never worried about where the child's explorations might lead her.

One very hot day while Aurora was making her tour of the encampment, some people on their way to a near-by city were passing through in a great automobile.

In the gray touring car rode Dorothea





“Aurora was a friendly little soul whom every one knew and to whom  
any shack was home.”







Proctor and her mother. They were returning from the summer resort where they had spent July. Dorothea lay back on the soft cushions, her eyes half closed. The white road stretched on and on ahead and seemed to unroll under the smooth wheels.

Suddenly the great car came to a shuddering standstill. The brakes creaked; there was a frightened cry—the cry of a little child. Dorothea's eyes opened wide. The chauffeur had jumped from the car and was picking up a little girl from the side of the road where the car had thrown her.

Where in that deserted land could a baby have come from! Mrs. Proctor realized at once that they were in the vegetable country. Around them spread a mushroom growth of little shacks. These must be the pickers' homes and this, one of their babies. Why wasn't she kept safely at home?

Aurora was crying piteously. She was not only hurt, but terribly frightened. Her leg ached and burned in a dreadful way.

"Broken leg, I think," said the chauffeur.



“What shall we do?” Mrs. Proctor looked despairingly about her. In another moment there appeared around a bend in the road two little girls with babies on their backs. Mrs. Proctor motioned to them questioningly, “Whose baby?” They did not understand and stood watching the lady with open-mouthed wonder. They knew the baby, however, and spoke her name.

“So Aurora is her name, is it? Well, these children appear to know her, so she must belong here. But where on earth is the child’s mother?”

“She must be at home somewhere,” suggested Dorothea.

Mrs. Proctor looked around, but no grown-up person appeared in sight. At length the combined efforts of the three travelers made the little girls understand what was wanted, and they pointed the way to Aurora’s home.

The old grandmother sat outside her shack making “tamales” for supper. For so many years she had stuffed corn husks in this way that even with her dim sight she could prepare and cook the supper over



the fire of coals on the ground. At the sound of Aurora's wail of distress she raised her head quickly, for she recognized her baby's cry. She heard, also, strange English voices and sat as though paralyzed.

Dorothea made a quick survey of the tiny home with its heap of soiled comfortables and blackened pots. One thing could be said for it, she thought, there was plenty of fresh air, for the shack was mostly cracks. In vain she looked around for what she could consider a bed on which to lay the baby.

Being carried had not helped make the broken leg comfortable, and Aurora was screaming lustily. The old grandmother raised her voice, too, and wrung her hands.

"Come quickly, let's get away from here," panted Mrs. Proctor.

"But we can't leave that baby we hurt with no one but a blind woman, and in such a place! There must be a hospital—a nursery—a church—a school—a kindergarten—something," said Dorothea, going over all the names she knew of institutions a town ought to have.



David, the chauffeur, laughed. "Pardon me, Miss, but those things don't seem to grow around here. The nearest hospital—well, I guess the very nearest is where we are going."

Mrs. Proctor gasped. "What sort of people can they be! Why it's hardly decent." She gathered her coat more closely about her and made a move to withdraw from such a questionable neighborhood.

"Well," said David, "they're all rather new to the country, and they take it as they find it, I guess."

The two women were not listening to him, however. Dorothea had already made up her mind there was but one thing to do—take the baby with them. Otherwise Aurora might be lame for life, if left there with not even a doctor around. So she quickly took a visiting card from the bag on her wrist and scribbled this little note: "I have taken the baby to the hospital and will bring her back." Then with David carrying Aurora, they hurried to the car.

It was a strange scene, the group of well-dressed Americans making off with a little,



round, screaming, Mexican girl. Several other babies joined their voices to Aurora's. Above all rose the high breaking sobs of the old woman calling on all the saints for help.

"Great kidnaping affair you are being party to here, Mater," Dorothea teased her mother, who sat back hot and bored over the whole proceeding. She was to have little chance to act aloof, however, for the rest of the trip. It was obvious that Aurora could not sit with David in front and must be propped up between the two women.

Dorothea tried sincerely to make the baby comfortable, but, in any position, the poor little broken leg throbbed and hurt. She tried to pull away from it, but that only made it hurt more. Then she was thirsty, very thirsty. Dorothea finally understood and gave her a drink of water.

At length, exhausted with pain and crying, Aurora grew quiet and fell asleep. Dorothea looked down on the little dirt-streaked face that lay against her sleeve and for the first time realized what a very



sweet, dimpled face it was, with its frame of dark hair. "Poor Mexican baby!" she thought. "She's pretty badly hurt, but we'll bring her back all the better for this excursion."

It was evening in the camp before all the bean pickers returned home and the exciting news was poured forth. At first they could not understand the old grandmother's excited story—it seemed unbelievable. Was the old woman crazy? Then the two girls who had directed Mrs. Proctor and Dorothea to the shack came with their story. Loud were the wails of the mother, the father swore vengeance by all the saints. The two little sisters, who were barely old enough to work in the beans, were awed at first and then joined their wails to the mother's. The poor grandmother was crushed with grief. Manuel, the big brother with a broad, pleasant face tanned almost black by the sun, alone seemed cool-headed. He questioned the group of neighbors which had gathered. Everybody talked and gesticulated to-



gether. Finally from the story of the two girls Manuel made it clear that no kidnapping had occurred, only an accident, that the people who took Aurora away seemed to want to leave her at home, had even brought her to the shack, but because Aurora screamed with pain, they took her away again.

"My poor baby, she's killed, alas!" wailed the mother.

Suddenly the old grandmother held out a crumpled card. She had just remembered it. Everyone crowded round. "It's a ticket," announced the father. No one could read English, so each had a guess at its meaning.

"Perhaps it says they will make her well again and bring her back," ventured one of the more optimistic neighbors.

Manuel accepted this idea and said, "Surely that is what they will do, they have babies of their own. They will bring her back." There was doubt in his mind, however, whether they would or not. He was certain that none of their pale babies could be as round or as pretty as his pet



sister. But he kept his doubts to himself and openly enlarged on the idea that some fine day up the long, white road would come the whir of a great machine, not dashing through as others did, but stopping and asking for the family of baby Aurora. How proud they would be then!

The mother and sister found some comfort in the thought. So many commonplace things happened every day to the babies in the camp, that it was almost a distinction to have a baby carried away by automobilists.

Someone at the factory deciphered the "ticket," as they called Miss Proctor's card, and confirmed Manuel's opinion that Aurora would be brought back some day. There was nothing they could do now, however, for in the excitement of the moment Dorothea had omitted to write her address on the card.

So life settled down to its usual routine of picking beans. The long days were spent between the plant rows, the evening meal was eaten round the fire as the cool night wind came on. At this hour often a



song would rise from somewhere, blending with the music of a crude banjo; but soon all would be silent and still in the pickers' camp. Rolled up in their blankets the people slept hard, for they must be up at the break of dawn and out again in the fields.

As the days went by, the end of the local bean harvest drew near. The campers began to talk of moving forward to the next bean section. No one could stay behind, for there would be no work left to do. Manuel wondered if their hopes about Aurora were to be disappointed, for nothing had yet been heard from her.

Moving day, that interesting event, arrived. It did not take long to pack the household furniture, nor to take apart the houses and place the boards in piles ready for the donkeys. When everything was packed and loaded, there was still a bundle for each one to carry—either food, clothes, or babies.

Every baby Aurora's mother saw reminded her of her own child whom she mourned as dead. "I will never see her again," she wailed, and this did not seem



unlikely, as there would be no one left to claim the child should she be returned.

“It is not far that we are going, Mother. I can return from time to time and see if there is any news of her,” Manuel comforted. But in his heart he had little hope.

Meanwhile, it must be confessed, the lost Aurora was not worrying in the least. In the beautiful city to which Miss Proctor took the little Mexican child, stood a fine new hospital. The chauffeur drove there immediately. A kindly nurse took Aurora to a doctor, immaculate in his white, hospital uniform. He looked at the broken leg. “We will fix it up as good as new,” he assured Dorothea; “but it will take time,—some weeks, in fact.”

Hours later, when Aurora awoke, she was in a new world. It was a world that was made up chiefly of rows and rows of little white iron beds and a vast space of shiny floor, the kind of floor on which to slip and slide.

Aurora could not explore this new world as she had her old one, for her leg was stiff



and big,—so big and all wrapped up that she could not move it.

She explored, however, with her bright eyes and made friends with everyone,—children, nurses, and doctors. She liked especially the lady with the bright clothes who came to see her, always with her hands full of oranges and toys.

To her surprise Dorothea found that the visits to the hospital, which she had first made from a sense of duty, became a pleasure to which she looked forward. When she appeared down the corridor, Aurora would begin to chuckle with glee and clap her brown hands so that the young lady's entrance became a triumphal procession between rows of interested beaming faces.

“Oh, you cunning little Mexican baby!” cried Dorothea as she kissed the fat brown cheeks. “I have a mind never to take you home at all. What on earth would my mother say to that? And what would yours say?”

Aurora gurgled some answer in her own peculiar tongue. You could take it to mean what you wished.



When her leg was really well, Dorothea dressed the child in the daintiest clothes she could find. It was indeed an adorable little girl that she took with her from the hospital to the large stone house in which she lived.

"How soon are you going back with her?" was one of Mrs. Proctor's first questions. She had no desire to have her daughter take up as a new fad stealing Mexican babies, even though she had to confess to Dorothea that Aurora was certainly charming.

"Her people won't know what to do with all those beautiful clothes," said Mrs. Proctor.

"I know it's foolish," sighed Dorothea; "but I thought it wouldn't hurt them to see her like that, even if the clothes don't last but a minute. I wonder how her mother will feel when she sees her baby clean and dainty for once!"

Dorothea put off the return of the child a couple of days—just to be sure, she said, that the baby was in the best condition. Then the party started.



What was their surprise when they reached the bean fields to find the forlorn sight of an abandoned settlement! Nothing was to be seen but a few tumble-down shacks which had been considered not worth taking along. The house Dorothea remembered so plainly right by the side of the road had disappeared completely, and no one was in sight. They spent some time hunting around the neighborhood, until David said they must go back or it would be too late for the long ride home. David added that this kind of people moves on to new pickings not very far away, and that another day they would start earlier and trace the bean pickers to their new camping ground.

“Poor little Aurora, they’ve lost you completely.” Dorothea sighed as she looked at the little lady in question, who did not seem at all forlorn, for she loved rides in the big car, and she loved Dorothea, too.

Only one week before this time Manuel had tramped all the way from the new camp to the old, only to return weary and



discouraged. He wondered if he should try it again. He had no clue by which to trace his sister.

But he did come back. One day something seemed to draw him to the old camping ground, though it meant a day away from the picking. He had given his mother little encouragement this time as he started out. It was the same story—miles of dusty road, then the deserted village, and no one in sight. There was not much use looking around. His throat felt strangely dry as he opened his handkerchief full of bread and cheese. He took a turn around the camp ground and then started up the road. There was nothing to tell him that miles away on that same road a gray automobile was traveling full speed toward the very spot he was leaving.

It was that same day Dorothea decided to return once more to the site of the old camp. It did not seem right to go ahead with any plans she had for bringing up Aurora without first making every effort to find the child's parents. But the car arrived at the lonely ruins of the deserted



settlement, only to discover no clue. They then continued on along the white road. Aurora, cuddled up against Dorothea, was wide awake and pointing to many passing things that interested her. Suddenly she gave an excited jump. "Man'l, Man'l," she cried and almost threw herself from the car.

"Stop!" shouted Dorothea, just as David, recognizing something unusual in the child's excited delight, threw on the brakes.

Manuel it was indeed. He could scarcely believe his eyes. This little creature, his Aurora? There was no hesitation, however, on Aurora's part. She flung herself headfirst at the big brother who used to throw her around so delightfully.

The boy tried to explain in broken English. Miss Proctor and David got a general impression of what he meant—that the camp was now farther on. "Get in," Dorothea motioned to the seat beside the chauffeur, "and show us the way."

It was a great experience for Manuel, sitting on the front seat of the great car.



It was a great experience, too, for the whole encampment when the party arrived. The rejoicing over Aurora might well have taken the form of the beautiful words of long ago, had Aurora's mother known them. Ignorant and uneducated though she was, her heart sang a song that was like it: "My little daughter was dead and is alive again, was lost and is found!"

Dorothea found it hard to tear herself away, hard to kiss good-by the child whose dainty dress was already a sorry sight from rapturous embraces. She pressed a crisp bill into the mother's rough hands. "For Aurora," she said and was gone.

The automobile moved noiselessly out upon the great white road that leads away from the vegetable fields toward the city. Dorothea waved as long as she could make out the shack. "My little round Aurora is at home," she said half aloud.

"David, did you say there was nothing here, nothing anywhere, not even a nursery or a kindergarten for little children? I could hardly bring myself to leave her. What if she should get hurt again!"



“Oh! she’ll probably grow up all right like the rest of them have, without anything,” was the cheerful answer.

“Like the rest of them,” thought Miss Proctor. That was what hurt most. But after all what could she do to make her Aurora grow up any other way! Hospitals, schools, churches don’t just grow, they must be planted. The thought came with a shock to the wealthy city girl for whom everything was conveniently “just round the corner.” Somehow the busy bean pickers had been forgotten. “Some of us must wake up and plant hospitals and such things where these people are,” she admitted with conviction, “and it surely will keep us busy planning for all the things they need. There must be gardens for the children to grow in as well as gardens for the beans. And they must be planted for all the year round for these people who live in houses that move away.”







# THEY WHO FIND AMERICA







## THEY WHO FIND AMERICA

**I** WONDER what it will be tonight," said Jim in a loud whisper to his neighbor as a group of boys settled down on the floor as near as they could get to the Lady Beautiful, who sat beside the fire.

"What do you want it to be?" she asked.

Jim thought a minute. "I would like a story of a big city, a real big one—New York, perhaps."

"How about it?" The lady turned to the rest.

"That's all right," came from all sides.

"Well, we will go then to the city, the darkest, brightest spot of all. I wonder what we have here in this home that comes to us from the city!" The Lady Beautiful glanced about. A group of little girls was sitting so that their many-colored aprons made a sort of patchwork quilt upon the floor. "Aprons, of course!" she exclaimed. "The aprons came from the city. Let us take our journey tonight to a home from which aprons come."



## THEY WHO FIND AMERICA

Away, away through the night flew a little cloud, its filmy streamers floating out behind. It flew over the tops of the trees and over the rivers and meadows, until at last below it there was nothing but tall buildings. It brushed against great shadowy office buildings, then flew on, waving to the sparkling lights that winked and twinkled so roguishly on broad, lighted streets. It passed over a great section of buildings that looked like square boxes with rows and rows of lighted shelves, each shelf divided into pigeon-holes. In the shelves lived the people of the city, all tucked away at night, each in the little section he called his own home.

Then the cloud flew where the apartments grew smaller and darker, and the smaller they grew, the more people crowded into the corners, and these "shelves" were called the tenements of the great city. Here the little cloud settled down on a narrow iron stairway, a fire escape, at the top floor of one of these tenements. A tiny





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“In the shelves lived the people of the city all tucked away, each in the little section he called his own home.”







window gave a peep into a small room where a light burned dimly. There were dozens of aprons, a whole heap of blue ones cluttered in a disconsolate heap on the floor. Piled high on a table were apron strings, and nearby sat a little girl sewing as fast as her fingers could fly. She was fastening the strings on to the aprons. Beside her sat a little Italian woman sewing also. Neither had spoken for ever and ever so long. At last the mother laid down her work with a sigh and looked at the little figure bent over the apron strings. "Little Liza, how long and fast you have sewed! You must be very tired." It was hours that they had sat there working.

The mother rose wearily and went to cover more closely two children who lay feet to feet on a low couch. It was cold in the dimly-lighted room. All day there had been no coal to put in the little stove.

"I wonder where it is," she sighed as she resumed her seat, her voice full of weariness.

"What, Mother?" Liza stopped, too, and stretched her stiff little hands.



“I have thought often that it is lost,” confessed the dark little woman. “Surely this is not the America we heard of before we came here. It is not the land of which they told us in Italy, but a country of strange, hard ways. There are none who try to understand when one asks the way. They brush one and go on. They are all hurrying. Even the food is not good. I was never troubled over my babies in Italy. They grew rosy and fat eating what we all ate. But now—poor little Nickie is so thin he is like to blow away. Yes, it is a country with strange, hard ways,” she repeated sadly.

“Mother, I wonder if it is we who are lost and not America. I think the America we heard of is here somewhere—only we have not found it. At the Friendly House, you know—”

She was interrupted by the entrance of Tito. He flung his cap on the table where Liza rescued it quickly from being entirely lost in the pile of apron strings. There was not a spot in the room that was not piled high with something,—it was such a



very small room for six people to live in!

“Well, Tito, where is your father? He never comes home any more,” wailed the mother.

“I guess he is afraid to come, for he has no money to bring home for you and the children. They have no more money to give out at the meetings as they did at first. He does not even go to them because he cannot understand.”

“Where is he, then? But why do I ask? I know what he is doing. He is with that crowd of men who get drink secretly. But what is it that makes you seem glad?” she added impatiently. “I know you have had nothing to eat, though that you try to keep from us. My poor Tito,” she moaned, softening, “you were ever a brave lad. What gives you courage in this strange land?”

“I cannot describe it, Mother, but at the meetings of the men I feel that I am not alone in this big country. I feel that there are men and boys who mean to stand by each other. They will some day make things better in the dusty shop, and we



will have more food and coal in our homes. We may even find somewhere something beautiful. I cannot tell how I feel it, but as I listen and every night come to know more of what the strange tongues say, I know I was right in coming out of the shop."

"Then the men did not gather around you and tell you to come out as they did your father?"

"No, I was young and in another room of the work. The boss man of my room comes to me and offers me more money in the envelop if I do not go. I go out from the factory thinking hard, and I meet the men so eager, so full of joy that everything is settled and they are going to have something to do. I ask all about it and I have many answers. Some say there will be no more dust from the stone we cut to choke the throat, others think it will mean more milk for *bambinos*, others know it will mean we can buy shoes and clothes. One man who speaks Italian asked me about our family and how long we are from the home country. Then I think that this



must be the America that we heard of where people work together."

"Oh, we all believed much when we came," said the mother bitterly, "but see how we live!"

"I know, Mother, but such is the way they all talk at the meeting. They asked tonight if there were any in great need. I didn't understand until the man next to me explained later, and then they had taken all the names. They want to help. I should have stayed until the meeting was over, for some seem to think more good news will come before many hours, but I was so tired."

"Ah, my poor little boy," sighed his mother. Tito was tall and large for his age, so the factory had taken him even though he was a year under the youngest working age.

The baby coughed and cried. The mother hurriedly dipped the corner of her handkerchief in some sweetened water and ran to put it in the child's mouth.

"We must get something. There's nothing left to eat and no coal for two days,"



whispered Liza to her brother. "I have 'thought of going to the Friendly House."

"The Friendly House!" exclaimed the mother, rejoining them. "It is always the Friendly House. She comes back and says we must put shining oily cloth on the table and eat there, washing it off each day, nay, after every meal. Have they nothing better to do?"

"You know I have told you many things. It was the music on that Sunday that carried me up the stairs though I was so scared I hardly knew what I was doing. You know yourself how much better I speak the English since I have learned of them. They too speak of things as Tito does. I think they are wanting good for everybody," finished the little girl rallying to the defense of the Church House. Again the baby cried. The boy who had flung himself on the one bed in the room pulled himself up with a jerk.

"Come, we must do something. I think I can find the way to go to Father if Liza will come with me. He is always gentle with her."



“Go out alone at night with only your young brother?” exclaimed the mother, turning to Liza.

“All the girls do that here, Mother. I will be back very soon.” Liza smoothed the hair from the worn forehead and pressed her young red lips on the rough skin, as her mother threw her shawl around the child.

“A strange country indeed!” The tired little mother summed up all the puzzled perplexity and pain of her mind in the short phrase that she repeated dully. “A strange country indeed!”

“We will yet find America,” called Liza from the landing.

The two children slipped down the five flights of dark stairs—the glimmer of their mother’s light, held high for them, grew fainter, then darkness swallowed it up completely and they stumbled out from the last flight into the street.

Neither spoke, for each was struggling to be brave. The less said, the better, they thought.

Tito led the way through back alleys and narrow streets. High heaps of snow here



and there had gathered to themselves by a sort of mutual attraction tin cans, fruit peelings, odds and ends of food and belongings that always collect in such places.

They hurried along, Tito knocking his chapped hands together to keep warm. At the corner they turned upon a better-lighted street. A lady crossed from the opposite side and walked just ahead of them. Suddenly she turned, as if she had dropped something. The children came to a standstill beside her, and Tito stooped quickly, running his hand over the ground to pick up anything which might have fallen.

Then everything happened in a flash. She said something in a harsh, quick voice, and Tito darted away. What she said, Liza could not understand, probably Tito did not, but she raised her voice and shouted. Two policemen came running around the corner.

What the trouble was, Liza did not know, but she ran, her brother ran, the policemen ran, shouting English that would have challenged anyone to understand.



As they rounded a dark corner, Liza stepped back into a doorway, breathless and panting. Around the next corner went the others, but Tito's quick feet outdid them and he gained his own street with no one in sight. He bounded up the stairs, without turning to see the big policeman's figure as it dashed into view at that moment.

Only a few seconds passed between the boy's swift entrance to his home and the heavy thud of the police as they bustled into the wretched tenement and bolted the door behind them. The little mother wept hysterically as these representatives of the law took possession of her home. The children awoke to add their bit to the noise and confusion. Tito stood sullen, trying to make out what the men were saying. "No! No!" he put in dramatically in lulls between their heated words. When they had finished searching the room, even the previous lack of order was as nothing to the chaos they had created.

Tito, they took away with them and left the frightened woman wringing her hands



and wailing as only Italian women can. Neighbors peered in, but withdrew—the police had been there.

“Tito, Tito,” moaned the mother, “where have they taken him? And my little Liza too, is lost!” She beat her breast.

From where Liza crouched, she could see the woman still looking on the ground. Presently she went on a few steps and then stopped to talk to another policeman who had come upon the scene. A few minutes later around the corner appeared the two policemen and Tito with them. They were talking loudly and unintelligibly to the boy as they passed. Then there was silence again in the little alley and only the chance passer-by crossed the corner where the sad mix-up had occurred.

The truth of what had happened dawned slowly on Liza. The lady had dropped something, had thought Tito and she had taken it, and now they must be taking her brother to jail. What would happen to him? Her mind was filled with frightened images of Tito behind the bars in some



dark dungeon. The numb coldness that gripped her made it hard to think or act. She must do something. Perhaps what the lady lost was still there. Oh, if she could find it and save Tito!

She ran to the spot and knelt on the cold, ice-crusting pavement, feeling over the surface with her little bare fingers. Nothing there! A dozen people had passed since the occurrence. What hope was there! But she bent over the edge of the curb, running her fingers through a crack that ran between the pavement and the frozen pile of snow shoveled into the street. A jagged point—a piece of ice—no, it was too hard for that. It moved, yes, she had it now out on her hand. Not a piece of ice at all, but a lovely thing that shone and sparkled as it hung from a tiny chain.

A heavy hand came down on the child's shoulder, so hard that Liza almost dropped the precious thing she had just found.

“What, still here?” said a man's voice. “And you were the one that had it all along! He gave it to you, eh, and ran?”

The girl looked at him with her great



dark eyes full of bewilderment. She could not understand all he said, but she understood the accusing tone and shook her head. "No, no, I find. Tito where?" she questioned.

"You'll find out fast enough, just this way please." The man meant to be kindly, but he spoke in the loud voice that people use in speaking to foreigners. They try to gain understanding by dint of noise. Liza went with him willingly enough, for it meant going to Tito.

It was not until the next morning, however, that they met in the children's court. Things looked dark for the two, even when Liza was produced.

In broken words, using all her newly-gained English, Liza tried to explain. She was puzzled indeed. Bravely she had left her hiding place to hunt the piece of evidence that would free Tito. Now things seemed worse than ever. She had done no good. She was on the verge of tears. Would no one understand, no one believe her? Mother was right, it was a strange, hard country. With the thought of the lit-



the mother waiting so scared at home, Liza gulped and the last word ended with a sob. She put her hands over her flaming face.

She did not see the quiet-looking woman who had walked up the aisle and stood waiting to speak a word. The judge turned to her as he often had turned before with a sigh of relief.

“I know this little girl. She comes to our church classes. I think she is telling the truth, trying to tell it. Let me ask her to tell me the story in her own language.”

With the first words of that quiet, kindly voice that she had heard before, Liza looked up. She would have run to the woman, had she not been so frightened. Under the persuasive questioning of one who seemed to understand, Liza told the whole mixed-up story.

When translated to the judge, it seemed sensible enough. And then, too, these children did not look like thieves. Their faces were bright and honest, though sadly pinched now with cold, hunger, and fear.

“Will you be responsible for them?” the judge asked the lady.



“Yes, gladly,” she replied.

They left the court, one on either side of their new friend, and it seemed to Tito and Liza as if they were walking in a dream.

“You have not been to us for many days, Liza. What has been the matter?”

“I sew—working home,” explained Liza. “Men no job.” The strike again, thought the worker. The little girl’s cheeks seemed thinner than usual. How many had suffered these cold winter days!

Just then a man passed the three. He was walking with a buoyant step, his head held high. He noticed Tito and stopped to say, “Heard the news? It has just come—this morning. It is all fixed up. Not all we ask for, but pretty good, and every man back at his job tomorrow.”

Vaguely Tito and Liza took in more from his actions than from his words.

“I go to tell the men so we will all be in our places tomorrow.” He threw up his cap for joy, as he went on. Tito threw up his cap, too, with a quick burst of Italian feeling.



As they walked toward the tenement in which they lived, the lady talked with them in their own tongue, and discovered their needs. She saw to it that they carried home with them milk for the baby and a loaf of bread for themselves.

The icy hand of the little girl, laid on her warm one as they climbed the dark flight of stairs, made her ask, "Have you no coat, Liza, that you are so cold?"

"No," answered Liza simply. How good the lady was to care!

"When you come around to the house today I must see if there is a coat and some mittens for you that other American children have passed on, as one does in a big family to the younger ones who are growing up."

"American children?" murmured Liza wonderingly. "They bring things there?"

"Yes, indeed. Tito must come, too," went on the lady. "Bring him, Liza, to the Friendly House."

"I have wanted him to come," said Liza, "for he can sing, and he could be with the boys who lead the songs."



“There are many things he could do with other boys who are all learning to be real Americans.”

“What is this place?” asked Tito abruptly.

With a wisdom she did not herself realize, the lady answered slowly in almost the boy's own words. “It is a spot where people work together for each other. People who know English and people who don't, come there. Boys and girls who have much in books and clothes and toys share them with those who have little. They do not want anyone in America to need things or anyone to stand alone. And your mother, there are many mothers who come there, too, with their babies, and—”

“Oh, Mother!” they had reached the top floor of the tenement by this time. Liza stumbled in without explanation or introduction of the visitor. “The Friendly House is for you, too, and for Tito. I, also, thought America was lost last night, but this friend has come who will show us the way. Now we can all find America together!”



## ROSE ELLEN MAKES A HOME







## ROSE ELLEN MAKES A HOME

**I**T was over—the story of those who find America. The boys and girls were very still; no one wanted to move. Miss Paxton had announced that it was the last story evening that the Lady Beautiful could be with them. A group of boys started a cheer. “Three cheers for the Lady Beautiful!” Rose Ellen’s name for the guest had come quite naturally to Jim’s lips, and he had led the rest.

The lady flushed with pleasure. No one would ever know what a joy it had been to her to talk with these children of the orphanage. The little girls crowded around to say good-by.

“Will you ever come back again?” asked Rose Ellen eagerly.

“I should certainly love to sometime,” smiled the lady.

“I know. We must plan something that she will just have to come back for,” declared the little girl vigorously, as the loved visitor was carried off by Miss Paxton.



A few of the boys and girls remained gathered about the fire. "Some stories, that Lady Beautiful of yours can spin out!" admitted Jim to Rose Ellen. He had taken a scornful attitude just at first, largely to tease Rose Ellen, but the cheer he had led that evening had given him completely away, and showed that he too was an enthusiastic admirer of the new trustee.

"Say, don't you think we could make a game about it?" asked Rose Ellen after a moment. "I can think of the nicest game, only I haven't thought very far," and she turned to the whole group enthusiastically.

"Sure," replied Jim, "fire ahead."

Many heads were soon close together planning. Half a dozen were talking at once. The bell had to be rung twice before there was the slightest motion to obey the bedtime signal.

"Some great scheme is hatching," thought Miss Paxton. It was a sure sign of action in the air when Rose Ellen and Jim Grange got together. "Probably some



mischief," she said to herself. "But what a great success the story hours with the new trustee have been!"

The next day Miss Paxton learned that the "great scheme" was not mischief, but a plan for the coming holiday season.

As Christmas came near, each class group of children chose some spot as their own and kept secret what they were planning, making, and inventing. There was a lot of curiosity and great excitement in the air. Miss Paxton had cooperated beautifully with the scheme Rose Ellen and Jim planned.

One night when the story hour was past and a few girls were talking things over with the Lady Beautiful, Rose Ellen had said: "We love to hear these stories, but they make me feel like crying because here in this home we can't do anything to help."

"Can't you?" asked the Lady Beautiful quizzically. "Just think about it."

Rose Ellen did think about it and because she thought, the Christmas plan had grown.

The great event of Christmas day was



to be an exhibition—an exhibition not of neatly written school compositions, nor of embroidered doilies, nor of fancy ribbony frills; but a wonderful array of things made by the boys and girls themselves for the children of Porto Rico and Alaska and for the children of the city and of the field. Each class group was to act out a charade which represented the life of the people to whom their box was to be sent. The other groups would guess the meaning and name.

There is not much to give away or to make things of in an orphanage, so it took a great deal of planning and whispering in corridors to carry out Rose Ellen's idea.

"I am making something for the little lame Maria," said Maggie, one of the younger group, to Rose Ellen one day. "It's clothes, but you never put it on."

What could it be! Rose Ellen hugged the little girl in passing and whispered a guess in her ear. She knew that there were many tiny handkerchiefs being made out of rag-bag scraps. Miss Paxton had suggested them from her own wide experience of schools and small noses.



Some wonderful toys were being made by the older boys. Bob Williams thought windmills would be especially fine in Porto Rico. The little boys all banded together to make Noadluk a book. He really deserved one, they thought, and they would make a book worth waiting for.

Some of the older girls who pretended to be knitting sweaters for themselves had to admit that on closer view these sweaters looked like mittens and mufflers. As their busy fingers flew, they chatted with each other.

"I can just see the little Italian girl who will wear this red scarf," said Esther.

"It will be becoming, but not any more so than my blue one will be to the golden-haired Swedish girl who comes often to the Friendly House," added Gertrude.

One group of little girls wanted to do something no one else would think of, so they had the sewing teacher help them make bandages for the babies and children who break their arms or legs.

The whole scheme was great fun. Each boy and girl had a part and each was happy



in working hard. Miss Paxton found the plan left little time for quarreling or mischief-making.

The atmosphere before Christmas is always full of anticipation, but never before had there been so much excitement in an orphanage. It grew and grew. Faces beamed till they seemed actually to be rounder by the time the great day came.

Something of all this joyous excitement was passed on to the Lady Beautiful by Miss Paxton when she saw her one day. "You started the ball rolling. Would you care to come over for the great celebration?"

Lady Beautiful was delighted. Christmas afternoon was not an easy time to get away from home, but perhaps her own children would come with her. She handed Miss Paxton a check, "To send the things away with," she explained. "It can be my children's part in the lovely gift."

Later she told Charles and Helen about this gift which she had made in their names. They had not earned it, nor had they even decided about it, so they did not



get much fun from the really generous Christmas present. Anyway, they were busy with preparations for their own Christmas.

Helen had spent hours and hours in her room wrapping up pretty things in spotless tissue paper and deciding where to put the bright Christmas stickers and tags. She fretted a great deal over the gifts she was making. Even the night before Christmas she was still unsatisfied.

“I must find a better present for Gladys Marks,” she worried. “Dorothy told me what Gladys had for me. She was shopping with her when Dorothy bought my gift. Oh, dear, I really ought to have more money for Christmas presents, Mother!”

Mother put on her thinking cap and something was found as a better present for Gladys.

“But do you have to wrap that up before you go?” Her mother’s voice held a shade of disappointment. “Do leave it and let us have a few Christmas carols before you and Charles leave for the Hartley party. Daddy would love it so.”



“Oh, well—just one then. Come on, Charles,” and Helen joined her mother at the piano.

Father sat in the leather chair by the open fire. He laid his hand on the tawny head beside him, which was bent low over a new story book.

“Come, Charles, Mother and Helen want you to sing with them.”

Charles read on to the end of his paragraph, then, yawning, closed the book and walked over to the piano. He tried to look bored.

“It must be one I know,” he stipulated.

“All right, then, choose it quickly. It’s always your choice!” and Helen’s petulant voice added nothing to the cheer of Christmas Eve.

Her mother patiently refrained from reproving her. Charles really loved to sing, in spite of pretending to be bored, and he soon threw all the power of his lusty young lungs into this quaint old song:



## GOOD KING WENCESLAUS

Good King Wenceslaus looked out,  
On the Feast of Stephen,  
When the snow lay round about  
Deep and crisp and even.  
Brightly shone the moon that night,  
Though the frost was cruel,  
When a poor man came in sight  
Gathering winter fuel.

Hither, page, and stand by me,  
If thou know'st it, telling,  
Yonder peasant who is he?  
Where and what his dwelling?  
Sire, he lives a good league hence,  
Underneath the mountain,  
Right beside the forest fence,  
By Saint Agnes' fountain.

Bring me flesh and bring me wine,  
Bring me pine logs hither,  
Thou and I will see him dine  
When we bear them thither.  
Page and monarch forth they went  
Forth they went together,  
Through the rough wind's wild lament,  
And the bitter weather.

Sire, the night is darker now  
And the wind blows stronger,  
Fails my heart, I know not how,  
I can go no longer;  
Mark my footsteps good my page,  
Tread thou in them boldly,  
Thou shalt find the winter's rage  
Freeze thy blood less coldly.



In his master's steps he trod,  
Where the snow lay dinted,  
Heat was in the very sod  
Which the saint had printed.  
Therefore, Christian men, be sure,  
Wealth or rank possessing,  
Ye who now will bless the poor,  
Shall yourselves find blessing.

When the children were gone to the Christmas party, Mother and Father trimmed the tree. A tall graceful fir it was that just fitted the corner of the library. How lovely it would look all lighted up against the dark woodwork!

"Won't Charles be crazy about these cars!" Father was down on his knees trying them out.

"His father certainly is," laughed the Lady Beautiful. "I suppose he won't have any more use for those smaller ones he got last birthday, for these are what he wanted then."

"What a pile of things from Grandmother! I do believe it's a collapsible doll house with all the furnishings. Do look at this—a tiny Victrola! Did you ever!" They were like two children arranging everything in place.



“It seems a shame for just one little girl to have all this,” the Lady Beautiful sighed. “I am afraid we are spoiling our pretty Helen. I hate to hear that dissatisfied tone in her voice so often. I hope everything will be happy on Christmas day.”

Everything was quite happy the next day. Just opening presents around the tree took most of the morning. Indeed there were so many packages that no one had time to look at anything very long. Mother kept catching up tags and cards and trying to keep track of them all for “thank-you” notes.

“Aw, Mother, have I got to write all those letters? I tell you it makes Christmas too much like work,” grumbled Charles.

“I know one note that will be a short one. Look at this crazy thing from Jane. It looks like the Five-and-Ten, and I gave her that lovely paint box!”

“Well, that’s a great system!” laughed Father. “If the length of your note depends on the value of the gift, I guess it



will have to be some twenty page wholesale epistle you write Grandma and Aunt Hattie for that complete housekeeping establishment, Helen. Have you even seen all these wonderful things?" He pointed out an adorable manicure set on the dressing-table.

"Oh!" gasped Helen, "how wonderful! Dorothy got a set for her doll last year, but it wasn't half so white and shining as this." She was down on the floor looking through the lovely playhouse whose wonders she had only begun to explore.

"I wish Charles would play house. At least, he might give my dolls a ride in his train."

Charles took up the idea gladly and all was peace and happiness in the home of the Lady Beautiful. For the next half-hour the young lady dolls enjoyed a fine outing, then the wreck came off which Charles had staged so splendidly with the real switches. It was a great success as a wreck, except that he had forgotten the dolls in his excitement. Tears did not mend the chipped china nose, but only made Helen's little pink one red.



During the morning's play they had both forgotten about the trip to the orphanage Mother had spoken of some days before. The big Christmas dinner was over, and they all felt a bit too full and uncomfortable.

"Must I go to the orphanage, Mother, when I have that whole chest of tools I haven't even counted over?"

"No, I just thought you'd like to go, Charles, and see the toys those boys have made. We would like to have you take the trip along with the rest of us in the car."

"Oh, but I can't go, Mother, I forgot about it," burst in Helen. "I told Gladys I'd come over there and see all her things, and we were going together to Betty Parks'. They always have such a wonderful tree, you know."

Charles caught a glimpse of the disappointment on his mother's face. "Mummie dear, if you really want us—. Come on, Sis, let's go along. I've never seen an orphanage anyhow."

Helen hesitated.

"I'll telephone Mrs. Parks that you for-



got a little engagement with thirty young gentlemen not to speak of more than that many young ladies as well," suggested Mother.

Helen laughed in spite of herself, and the day was saved. Her mother breathed a sigh of relief; there was not going to be a scene. So they all piled into the big car with Daddy and were off over the hard packed snow.

Everything was a whirl of excitement in the large, comfortable orphanage. The whole atmosphere was festive. Evergreen branches which the boys had got from the woods hung over the doorways and decorated the rooms. All the children together had decorated the house with much consulting and standing off, "looking at the effect upside down, and right side up," as Rose Ellen termed it.

There was a nice tree, a gift from the First Church. There were more wonderful inventions on it in the line of trimming than any tree in history. That at least was what the Lady Beautiful exclaimed, and Bob announced it behind the scenes



to the first squad of characters who were busy getting ready.

Of course, there was the usual long wait before things began, but everybody was in such good spirits that the various hitches and delays caused no serious annoyance.

“How on earth did you ever bring such a celebration about?” asked the Lady Beautiful of Miss Paxton when all was over. “The charades, representing the people to whom the gifts were going, were cleverly planned, and the gifts themselves were unique and very well made.”

“I? Why I did almost nothing at all. You started it all with your stories. They put an idea into the ingenious head of Rose Ellen.”

“My Rose Ellen with the long dark braids and big blue eyes? I practically told those little tales to her. She used to sit quite near me, you know, and her eyes were full of both interest and wistfulness.”

“Rose Ellen of course was not alone in working out this plan. The children are all used to falling in line with her schemes and pranks, so they entered into this one



with zest as the next new thing to do. It has meant a lot to us all. Somehow it has brought us all together—made this place more of a real home than it ever was before.”

“More of a real home,” thought the Lady Beautiful. “So Rose Ellen has found out an answer to her own query!”

When apples and popcorn were being served around the lighted tree, Lady Beautiful found Rose Ellen by herself for a moment. It is doubtful which was the more excited of the two.

“Rose Ellen, you promised to tell me when you found out the answer.”

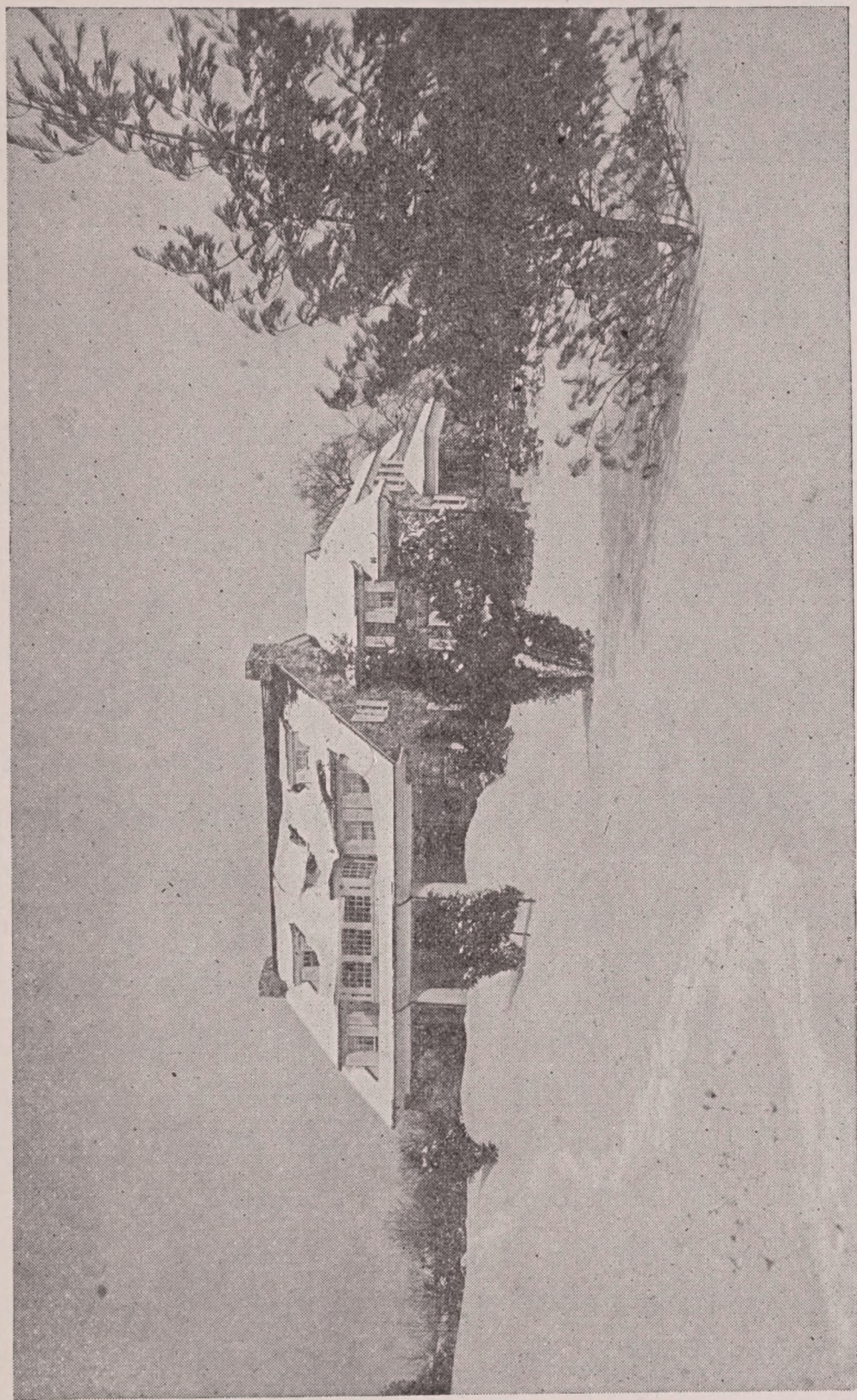
“Answer to what?” asked Rose Ellen, surprised.

“What makes a home. Don’t you remember?”

“Yes, but I have been right here in the orphanage and I have scarcely thought about it lately. I have been thinking about those other interesting homes which needed things—and we’ve had such fun making the things for them!”

“Rose Ellen,” the Lady was speaking





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“What could it be that Rose Ellen had given to this home beautiful!”







very low, "I have a home, too, that needs things. Tonight you have helped me to discover just what it is our home lacks."

"Your home lacks? It can't lack anything. Why I know just what your home is like! I can just see it!" Rose Ellen closed her eyes. "It is the really, truly American home where everything is just lovely. It is the home beautiful."

"Yes, everything there is lovely," agreed the Lady. "Charles and Helen have almost everything they ask for. Yet with all this in the 'home beautiful,' as you call it, one thing has been lacking. That one thing you have given us or perhaps I would better say, you are giving us."

Rose Ellen's eager face was beaming. What could it be that she had given to this home beautiful! With the other children of the orphanage she had been trying to give help to the homes that needed things. None of them had thought for one moment that a home beautiful ever needed anything. Nothing in the twelve years of her life had so surprised her as these words of her new friend.



Lady Beautiful placed her hands lovingly on Rose Ellen's shoulders and said gently: "We have never known what it was to work together as a family to make other people happy."

Just then Helen ran over to them. "Mother," she exclaimed, "we want to do it, too, Charles and I! Oh, there are so many things I have just thought of that could go in the box to Porto Rico!"

Charles joined them and put in his word, "My things won't be done for this year, because I am going to invent them and make them with my new tools!"

"We, too, had so many ideas we couldn't get done this year," joined in Rose Ellen. "We'll all have to go right on and have it over again next Christmas."

"Say, Mother, I wish Rose Ellen and Carrie and Esther and Jane, and—" Helen searched hastily in her memory for more of these new-learned names,—could come and play with me. They would just love my doll house!"

"I think it will be lovely if they can," agreed her mother heartily.



Rose Ellen gasped with thrilled anticipation.

That would be one of the first ways to make ours more of a real home, thought the Lady Beautiful,—to begin right away to share the doll house.

They turned toward the tree as Jim, the song leader, started a closing carol. For a measure his clear, high voice carried it alone, then they all joined in and sang:

As with gladness men of old  
Did the guiding star behold;  
As with joy they hailed its light,  
Leading onward, beaming bright;  
So, most gracious Lord, may we  
Evermore be led to thee.

As with joyful steps they sped  
To that lowly manger-bed,  
There to bend the knee before  
Him whom heaven and earth adore;  
So may we with willing feet  
Ever seek thy mercy-seat.

As they offered gifts most rare,  
At that manger rude and bare,  
So may we with holy joy,  
Pure and free from sin's alloy,  
All our costliest treasures bring,  
Christ, to thee, our heavenly king.



It was Jim, the “butler,” who opened the door and helped the guests into their car. He was not a bit stiff now, his sandy curls had escaped from their watery smoothness in the excitement of the evening. The children were gathered—not upstairs this time, but every window showed a crowd of happy faces, and they waved good-by to the trustee who was no longer “new,” but a very dear old friend.

It had been Christmas indeed in the orphanage, truly Christmas. In the fun of sharing with others, the boys and girls had all been brought together into a big happy family, and the orphanage had become a real home.















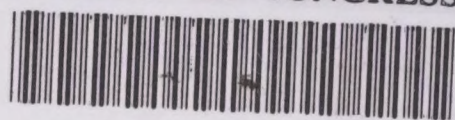








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